

Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 IO-10 ISO-00 SAM-01 SSO-00

NSCE-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

ACDA-10 OMB-01 SY-05 OPR-02 /099 W
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FM AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3423

INFO AMEMBASSY ACCRA

AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY BLANTYRE

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY GABORONE

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LOURENCO MARQUES

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

US MISSION USUN NEW YORK 1169

UNCLAS PRETORIA 4855

C O R R E C T E D COPY - GARBLED TEXT THROUGHOUT

EMO. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SF AO PINS

SUBJECT: SOUTH AFRICAN SOLDIERS CAPTURED BY MPLA IN ANGOLA

1. DEC 17 AFTERNOON PRESS HEADLINES OFFICIAL CONFIRMATION
OF CAPTURE OF MPLA OF FOUR SOUTH AFRICAN TECHNICAL SERVICES
CORPS ENLISTED MEN. THE FOUR WERE REPORTEDLY DISPLAYED TO
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PRESS IN LUANDA YESTERDAY.

2. STATEMENT BY MIN DEF BOTHA PARTIALLY QUOTED IN PRESS INDICATES THAT THE MEN WERE ON LOGISTICAL DUTIES ONLY AND THAT " IT IS ASSUMED THEY BECAME LOST WHILE FETCHING AN UNSERVICEABLE VEHICLE AND WERE TAKEN PRISONER BY MPLA FORCES. " STATEMENT CONTINUES:

"IT IS GENERALLY KNOWN THAT WE HAVE TAKEN PROTECTIVE STEPS ON THE NORTHERN BORDER OF SOUTH WEST AFRICA AND AT THE HYDRO-ELECTRIC POWER STATION AT CALUEQUE.

" THIS PROTECTION WAS PROVIDED AT THE INVITATION OF THE GOVERNMENTS OF OWAMBO AND KAVANGO AND WAS APPROVED BY THE PORTUGUESE AUTHORITIES AND OTHER PARTIES INVOLVED.

" SOUTH AFRICA HAS REPEATEDLY SAID THAT SHE IS WILLING TO WITHDRAW ALL HER FORCES FROM ANGOLA WHEN ATTACKS BY 'RUSSIAN-ARMED BANDITS' CEASE. ALSO IF THE WATER AND POWER SUPPLIES FOR WHICH SOUTH AFRICA HAS PAID ARE PROTECTED.

" WE WOULD ALSO EMPHASISE THAT THE RUSSIAN AND CUBAN PRESENCE IN ANGOLA IS RESPONSIBLE FOR ALL THE UNREST THERE AND THAT IT CONSTITUTES A THREAT NOT ONLY TO THE SECURITY OF NEIGHBOURING STATES BUT ALSO TO THE SECURITY OF THE IMPORTANT SEA ROUTE AROUND THE CAPE.

" THE REPUBLIC WISHES TO LIVE ONLY IN PEACE WITH ITS NEIGHBOURS, BUT FOREIGNERS MUST NOT BE USED TO UPSET ORDER IN SOUTH AFRICA AND SOUTH WEST AFRICA.

" WE RE-AFFIRM THAT NO FOREIGN TROOPS SHOULD BE IN ANGOLA AND THAT THE PEOPLE OF ANGOLA ALONE SHOULD DETERMINE THEIR OWN FUTURE IN AN ORDERLY MANNER."

3. MINISTER OF DEFENSE ANNOUNCED TODAY THAT SOME CITIZEN FORCE UNITS WOULD BE ASKED TO EXTEND SERVICE IN " THE OPERATIONAL AREA" TO TWELVE WEEKS INSTEAD OF THE THREE WEEKS NORMALLY REQUIRED. " THESE ARRANGEMENTS ARE NECESSARY AND IN THE INTERESTS OF OUR COUNTRY, WHILE AT THE SAME TIME PROVIDING THE UNITS WITH PROPER TRAINING. I AM CONFIDENT THAT THE PUBLIC WILL SUPPORT THESE STEPS," BOTHA SAID. HE ALSO ANNOUNCED THAT THE TERM OF SERVICE OF " A LIMITED NUMBER OF NATIONAL SERVICEMEN" WAS TO BE EXTENDED BY ONE MONTH. MEMBERS CONCERNED, WHO HAD BEEN SCHEDULED TO COMPLETE SERVICE ON JAN 7, WOULD BE NOTIFIED THIS WEEK OF EXTENSION TO FEB 6 " AS A UNCLASSIFIED

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RESULT OF LONG DISTANCES AND TRAVELLING TIME INVOLVED, AS WELL AS OTHER REQUIREMENTS."

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